

From: Carole West [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 August 2021 11:32
To: localplans@charnwood.gov.uk
Subject: Charnwood Local Plan 2021 to 2037 - Consultation Comments HA12, HA13, HA43, HA44

To whom it may concern – please forward this email to the appropriate department so that my comments can be considered in the Consultation.

I have looked at the documents online regarding the local plan and firstly wish to express major concerns about this consultation. The way the plan is presented and how comments are allowed to be made leads me to believe that it is excluding the many thousands of people who live in Charnwood who have a legitimate view who would wish to comment if they had time to look and could understand it. Many people, including me have found it difficult to navigate their way through the umpteen papers and indeed understand how the plan would be put into practice in their communities given the evidence provided.

The Council have produced this plan at a distance from the communities it is effecting and it feels like it is just an expensive paper exercise. I'm sure a lot of work has been undertaken and it has been produced following procedures but this consultation is not reaching the people in their communities in a way that they can respond effectively. As an example we found out that our local councillors were holding a meeting about the plan on the day of the meeting. We also found out that the Webinar arranged by Charnwood BC was on the same day and time as the local meeting. For many the notice was too short for either and was also at a time (5:30pm and 6 pm) when people were still trying to finish their working day. The consultation is also being undertaken in the height of the holiday season and with such short time scales how does this consultation expect to be effective and how can the people of Charnwood have confidence in the outcome? It has taken me many hours which I really didn't want to have to use just to look at the documents online. I would have preferred to look at a hard copy but have been told that I would have to travel to Loughborough and book an appointment. Had a hard copy been available at our local council offices it would have been more accessible to our community especially those who do not use the internet.

Our son in law and daughter who live in the same area with their young family just hasn't the time to comment in the format it is presented but are most concerned about the plan and its effects on our community and environment.

Talking to friends and neighbours many have said that it is all gobbledegook and have said that they have no confidence that anything they say will be taken notice of and it will go ahead regardless of comments made so why bother. I have some sympathy with this viewpoint but it does however effect all of our lives so whether or not this is in the right format I will try to comment and would like whoever it is who allows these plans to be adopted to consider all these issues. I feel they should also be aware of local feeling with regard to this consultation. I have tried to use the online format and submission process but did not understand it so am resorting to an email.

I would question whether the plan is positively prepared, justified or indeed effective.

There is insufficient detail in the plan. It is generic in its language and encompasses a multitude of options which may or may not be adopted. From what I understand it relies on the Planning Applications for the detail. Planning applications are made piecemeal, one development at a time. Unless the infrastructure is in place to accommodate all the changes in the plan it will not be deliverable and is therefore not effective.

As I live in Anstey I will focus on my local community and plans HA12, HA13, HA43 and HA44; in particular HA43 but have similar concerns about other communities all over Charnwood.

HA 43 – development of land West of Anstey – 600 homes and a primary school. Currently two planning applications have already been made P/20/2252/2 and P/20/2251/2. One is for the development of up to 100 homes, land north of Groby Road and the other is for development of up to 120 homes south of Groby Road. These planning applications refer only to the two sites within HA43 and not to further developments within HA43. Apart from local access onto the Groby Road and the estates themselves no other infrastructure is being put into place. These applications although part of the plan will not be subject to it as will be considered separately. This indicates that

planning permissions and therefore infrastructure will all be considered on a piecemeal basis and therefore the plan will not be fully deliverable and therefore not effective.

Grobby Road, Anstey is a narrow village road with one lane for each direction. At present cars park on one side of the road near the junction with Bradgate Road which makes that road single lane for a few hundred yards. The pavement on that side of the road ends abruptly at the Bradgate Road junction and on the other side it is so narrow that only one pedestrian can walk safely round the corner. It is very dangerous when walking on the pavement when you have one or more children or even a dog on a lead. The buildings on either side prevent widening of the road or pavement. I have seen mobility scooters having to use the road to navigate the junction to access the village. There are no crossings to enable pedestrians to cross the Bradgate Road safely. Bradgate Road is a busy road not just at rush hour but even on Sundays when people come through the village to access Bradgate Park. Further down the road cars park on the pavements as there are insufficient driveways for the amount of cars needing to park.

The other end of Grobby Road/Anstey Lane is a country lane with no pavements and leads onto the A50, 4 lanes of high speed traffic that approaches an island. It is a very difficult junction to navigate and many people I know drive through the village rather than using this junction.

During rush hour the traffic builds up at the Nook in the centre of the village. People living on the St James's Gate estate which is situated off Grobby Road and was built about 6 years ago mostly use their vehicles to access the village as it is about a 15 minute walk to the centre. The builder originally provided a subsidy for a bus route to St James's Gate. This expired after 5 years and the bus company stopped the route as it wasn't viable, not enough people used the bus. When the bus was running it blocked the junction at the end of Grobby Road on both inward and outward journeys as the junction was not suitable for such vehicles. Accessing the village by car also applies to people living in the new estates built in the last few years adjacent and near to HA44. The village car parks are always full. It is impossible to rely on getting an appointment at the doctors surgery and increasing people locally are using the 'walk in' centres at Loughborough as a matter of course to seek medical advice. There are plenty of children's parks in the village for younger children but very few facilities for older children and teenagers. There is not a Leisure Centre in the village so people have to travel to access swimming pools, gyms and other entertainments. The pavements around the nook are narrow and particularly where the chemist is situated can hardly accommodate 2 people walking alongside each other. If a mobility scooter or a person with a pushchair or child is going to the chemist people have to step into the road to avoid them (notwithstanding Covid). Access to the village shops and facilities is particularly difficult for disabled people especially those with sight and hearing loss.

Looking at the Local Plan I have to ask where does the plan tackle these issues? There is no information about new roads or where they would be placed. What infrastructure would be put into place to accommodate such an increase in population in the area. No additional shops are being planned to serve the community. No Leisure Centre or facilities for young people are being planned. I attended a webinar given by Charnwood Borough Council. They said that they had no influence over public transport serving the area as they are all privately owned it would be a matter for them and their profits. The current local bus service ends at about 9pm. No-one can therefore use public transport to access the City after this time therefore forcing people to use cars to go to theatres, cinema's, eating out etc. There are no bus routes across the county or Charnwood. We cannot access local beauty spots apart from by using our cars. The plan does not incorporate any of these issues. I fail to see how this plan meets its aims and therefore is not effective or deliverable.

Charnwood BC have said that they have no authority over the medical care in the area as this is a matter for the CCGs. There are no current plans to place another doctors surgery in the village and the intention is to use current facilities. In practical terms where the new housing is being placed it is too far to walk to the surgery when a person is ill. Private cars or taxis would be the only practical means. The car park that serves the surgery is already always full. The local plan does not address these issues. The people who designed this plan may have met or communicated with the CCG but in effect there are no joined up plans with the CCGs to serve the local population in Anstey. I therefore consider that the plan is not positively prepared.

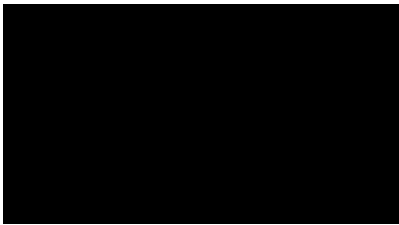
I have then thought about the increase in pollution and whether the plan effectively mitigates this given its aims incorporating Climate Change and preserving Biodiversity. The existing roads/pavements are not wide enough to accommodate cycle tracks and people need to safely

access the village. More houses, leads to more cars on the local roads. I personally do not think it is safe enough to ride a bike on the local roads with the traffic as it is now where I did in the past. I would not advocate members of my family cycling locally on the roads. The County Council recently sent a survey about means of travel to the people in Anstey saying that they are already concerned about the pollution in the area. It must be taken as given that a substantial increase in housing will increase pollution not just with vehicles but with more central heating boilers, air conditioning units, waste etc. There is also not just air pollution but noise and light pollution. There is also the question of constant dust and noise of building in the area over a long period. The fields and footpaths around Anstey give a buffer from the city and does help to maintain the biodiversity of the area. I have regularly seen roe and muntjac deer in the local fields. I have also regularly seen foxes, badgers, snakes, hedgehogs, frogs, field voles, mice and birds of all kinds all of which make their homes in the vicinity, not to mention insects and flora. The destruction of these fields which have been in existence for many hundreds of years cannot be replaced by a few green areas and tree planting. The plan does list the various habitats but not the flora and fauna that make their home there. The plan does incorporate planting of 3 for 1 trees but this will not mitigate the destruction of the habitats already there. At the aforementioned webinar the council talked about planting 3 for 1 which they say would allow for failure of some of the newly planted trees. Several trees that were planted by the builder on St James's Gate off Groby Road have been vandalised, failed to grow and not been replaced. It was also not specified if the trees would be saplings. In which case it will take many years for the newly planted trees to have much of an effect on the effects of climate change and biodiversity. There is also the reduction of productive farmland to take account of a subsequent loss to food production in the UK. This ultimately leads to more imports, food miles and pollution. The plan does not address this. The plan says that there will be a 10% net gain. I dispute this. I know a lot of work has been done producing papers and reports to back these figures up but this is again paper reports completed by people visiting the area and not living and working in the area who know first hand by observation what their environment consists of and how changes effect the environment. As an example; before St James's Gate was built there was a footpath going from Groby Road through the fields towards Newtown Linford. On one side was an ancient hedge and the other a field. All sorts of creatures lived in this hedgerow and the adjacent field and were regularly seen as previously described. The footpath is still there as is the hedge as it was stipulated that it should be maintained when St James's Gate was developed. It is now a made up footpath and is bordered by landscaped mown grass, houses and gardens. I regularly walk up the footpath and I litter pick along there. I don't see the wildlife apart from the odd bird diving for cover on this stretch. I do however see many cats in the hedgerow and a lot of litter. It is no longer countryside but a suburban environment. This small example of first hand knowledge shows that these developments will have a huge impact on the environment for biodiversity. There are of course flood plains in the fields around the Rothley brook in Anstey. Currently the car park at the local Co op regularly floods and is then unusable. I am aware that the builders plans will include measures to prevent further flooding. Currently we see gardens in St James's Gate being absolutely sodden despite them being on a hill. Householders are putting in their own additional drainage measures in as they are seeing 'rivers' running through their gardens taking away soil. Again first hand knowledge. The water used to be absorbed by the field but now it is mainly hard landscaped. The water table is very high and I have concerns that although measures will be put into place with so much more tarmac and building they will not be sufficient to accommodate the levels of drainage needed and the village will be effected not to mention individual householders as well as further down stream. In the green spaces that are mentioned in the plan there is no detail as to the type of planting that will be made and I have concerns that unless specified the builders will plant anything they have access to rather than being carefully thought out with conditions allowing for the effects of climate change in years to come. I am also concerned that the sewers will not be able to cope with the additional water in the systems. Items on the news in recent days concurs with this view that more severe weather conditions are a reality for us now and not just one off events in a hundred years. I have first hand knowledge of local children actually swimming in the local park situated adjacent to HA 43 at the bottom of Pear Tree Close when it flooded one summer and the village was cut off from Leicester. This was before any further building. I consider that the plan which should be realistic up to 2037 is already out of date given the effects of climate change on us now. there is a need to think 'outside the box' with regard to the housing of our expanding populations without using formulaic plans that were designed for a more stable environment.

The plan also refers to maintaining a distinct design and characteristics of the village. The plan allows for the village to be expanded by an additional 290 homes HA 12 and 13. Building of an estate has already taken place off the Gynsill Lane which has fudged the boundaries of the village already. The expansion on this side of the A46 is decreasing the buffer between Leicester City and Anstey. The Building in HA 43 will fudge the definition of our village and we will become another satellite of Leicester City. There is also the building of Ashton Green a massive development on our side of Leicester that will impact on the environs of Anstey. I would disagree that the plans will maintain a distinct design and characteristics of the village. I know people who live in the estate that has already been built off Gynsill Lane near to HA 12 and 13 and they do not feel as though they are part of Anstey, more like the outskirts of Leicester. It is important for well being and community adhesion for people to feel as though they belong to a place. The expansion of our village to the extent planned is destroying this sense of community as the characteristics of the village are being radically changed. I would therefore dispute that the plan is maintaining a distinct design and characteristics of the village.

The above comments gives some of the reasons for why I do not think that the plan is Positively Prepared, Justified or Effective and would like the issues outlined to be addressed before any plan is adopted.

Yours faithfully,
Carole West



Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10